

REMARKS

A. Request for Reconsideration

Applicant has carefully considered the matters raised by the Examiner in the outstanding Office Action but remains of the position that patentable subject matter is present. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the Examiner's position based on the amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

B. Status of the Claims and Amendments

Claims 7-24 are pending in this Application.

Claim 7 has been amended to clarify the wording, better define the invention to distinguish over the prior art, and rearrange the paragraphs to more clearly present the elements.

Claim 8 has been amended to provide an antecedent basis of "upper tip" for Claim 9.

Claims 10, 13 and 14 have been amended to delete the redundant limitation, since the arrangement of the axial support section has been recited in Claim 7.

Claim 11 has been amended to define the protrusion.

Claims 15 and 16 have been amended to remove a redundant limitation.

Claims 16 and 21 have been amended to correct their dependencies.

No new matter was added in these amendments.

C. Specification Amendment

Further, the Specification has been amended to change "aperture 85" at line 6, page 14 of the specification to "aperture 86". This is a correction of a typographical error.

D. Claim rejections under 35 USC 112 and objections to the specification

Applicant has amended claims and speciation to remove the rejected and objected formal deficiencies.

E. Claim Rejections under 35 USC 103

Claims 7, 10, 12, 19 and 20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nagaoka in view

of Davis. Claims 8, 9 11, 13-18 and 22-24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nagaoka in view of Davis and Kazuo;

In rejecting Independent Claim 7, the examiner asserts that the combination of Nagaoka and Davis teaches every claimed feature of Claim 7 including the cleansing tank. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

The invention relates to a filtration device with a vertically oriented hollow cleansing tank provided in a filtration tank. The cleansing tank has an opening at the lower end and a screw conveyor; the screw conveyor further has a shaft suspended within the filtration tank from above, the lower portion of which is supported by an axial support section, fixed on the lower end of the cleansing tank in the opening of the cleansing tank; the axial support section further has a frictional wear compensating mechanism at a portion where the shaft and the axial support section contact each.

Claim 7 has been amended to more clearly recite the configuration of the cleansing tank, where the following features with emphasis are not disclosed by Nagaoka and Davis:

"a vertically oriented hollow cleansing tank having an opening at the lower end thereof, provided in the filtration tank; wherein:

a screw conveyor within the cleansing tank, for conveying the filtration media upwards;

the screw conveyor has a shaft, which is suspended within the filtration tank from above; and the lower portion of the shaft is supported by an axial support section, which is fixed in the opening at the lower end of the cleansing tank; and

a frictional wear compensating mechanism is provided at a portion of the axial support section where the shaft and the axial support section contact each other..."

There is no where in Nagaoka and Davis teaches or suggests such a cleansing tank. Clearly, the cleansing tank of the present invention has at least 4 parts:

- 1) a screw conveyor is completely within the cleansing tank;
- 2) the screw conveyor has a shaft, which is suspended within the filtration tank from above without contacting the lower end of the filtration tank;
- 3) an axial support section supporting the shaft is fixed to the lower end of the cleansing tank; and

4) the axial support section has a frictional wear compensating mechanism.

Naganka discloses a filtration tank having a shaft tunneling through without a supporting portion, while Davis teaches a filter having a supported shaft but no cleansing tank. Neither Davis nor Nagaoka discloses a cleansing tank as claimed in Claim 7, where the cleansing tank has the above 4 parts, and the cleansing tank is completely inside of the filtration tank. Therefore, the combination of the apparatus of Davis and that of Nagaoka will not lead to the present invention defined in Claim 7.

Claims 8-24 depend on Claim 7. No cited reference discloses or suggests the filtration device of Claim 7 with additional features recited in claims 8-24. It is respectfully submitted that Claims 7-24 are patentable over Nagaoka, Davis and Kazuo, taken alone or in combination.

F. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

Should any extensions of time or fees be necessary in order to maintain this Application in pending condition, appropriate requests are hereby made and authorization is given to debit Account #02-2275.

Respectfully submitted,

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